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ESSAY

ON

Political Lying.

The SECOND EDITION.



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ESSAYS

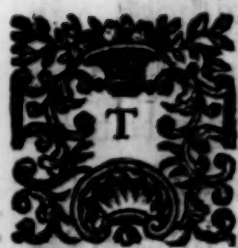
UPON

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stances and Additions. Some fifty years ago, when the Doctor wrote, the Art of Political Lying, as he calls it, was almost in its Infancy. Assertions, indeed, bold, vehement and sanguine were always ready, but they often awkwardly waited for the Oath, that should confirm, and give them Credit; the Countenance was not yet hardened to that unblushing Assurance, that can support being detected, and laugh at the Weakness, that believed it. A little Probability, and sometimes a little Truth was thrown into the Composition of some more important Falshood, in Compliance with weak Believers. This Wisdom was necessary in tempering a new Art, for Gold itself may be too much refined. It requires a little Alloy to make it bear the Hammer, and give it a proper Ductility. But at present, Thanks to some late Improvements,—yet it were better to enter into the Proof by the strong Evidence of Facts.

In

almost

In Loyde's Coffee-House shall lie a List of an hundred, thirty nine Ships taken by the Enemy, in some sixty-four Days; their value is moderately computed at five hundred thousand Pounds; Distress, Ruin, Bankruptcies are the apparent Consequences. Yet in the same Coffee-House a Man shall assert, that the Fleet was never better commanded than by Mr. W---t; never better directed than by the unknown and unknowing Earl of T---e. He shall lament the Changes in the Admiralty, and assert, that his Lordship's Dismission is owing to his Royal Highness the Duke's not liking him: that Lord W---a is put into his Employment, only to please the said Duke, having neither Will, nor Judgement of his own, and being a Dependent (no Doubt) of Mr. F--x's: that the said Mr. F--x is an avaricious Man, and receives from Mr. Cal---t full fourteen thousand Pounds a year, as his share of the Profits arising from the
almost

almost numberless Agencies, which his Interest alone could have procured him.

What an Advantage has a Lyar, for how shall Assertions, ever so false, be contradicted? Shall Mr. F--x go to Justice Fielding, and make Affidavit, that he never received a Farthing more than the Salary of his own Offices from any Man, either directly, or indirectly? What Effect would such Experiment have?

We may easily judge, if we recollect with what Assurance it was, and is still asserted, that his Royal Highness demanded a body of British Troops to go with him to Germany: that it was debated in Council, where Mr. P--t, our only Patriot, our only Orator, opposed and defeated a Measure so pernicious to his Country, by pure Superiority of Eloquence and Reason. We would not rob this Gentleman of his due Praise, or deny how often, and from how many

such

such imaginary Dangers he hath preserved his Country. But although Mr. F--x was authorised by his Royal Highness to declare to the House of Commons, that no Intention of this Kind ever entered into his Thoughts; although Mr. L---e, when called upon by Mr. F--x, declared he had never heard of such a Design, yet did this Lye disappear? Was it ever, as in Candour and Justice it ought, disavowed by the Faction? Does it not still twinkle in every News-paper, and shine out in many?

Does it not continue to be the bold assertion of *the factious Haranguer*, and the firm Belief of the no less factious Hearers, in what are called the *honest Coffee-Houses*? In one of which, this Lye was nobly supported by another, for it was asserted most solemnly, that neither Mr. F--x, nor Mr. L--e had ever denied the Fact. Let me recommend *this Lyar* to his Fraternity, as a noble Pattern of Imitation.

But

But a certain *honourable* Person, the eldest Hope of a *Right Honourable* Family, hath given us a Species of Lying unknown to our Ancestors. He boldly paints his Lyes, and although we must allow the Dutch like Genius of his Pictures, yet we must admire the Boldness of his Pencil, and the Strength of his Colouring. This Man of Honour with all the likeness of Caricature, hath lately exhibited a Recruiting Serjeant, and humourously hung out of his Pocket a Label of £ 14000, for Agencies. Did this *Man of Honour* really believe the lying Label he himself had written? Has he any Reason whatefer to believe it? This Painter has Sense of Shame enough, I hope, to feel the Force of these Questions. How will he elude them?

Would Demonstration from Figures, that one third of that Sum exceeds the whole income of that Person's Agencies, make him retract or not repeat the Falshood?

hood? No; he wants no Demonstration. He calumniates against Knowledge, and in his Rage of Scandal forgets, that he is imputing as a Crime to *one* Man the helping one worthy, diligent, and honest relation, whilst he is himself a Retainer to *another*, who deals out the public money to his Cousin's Cousins, and, which is still worse, public and important Trusts to ignorant Relations.

But our Label-Painter is not contented with displaying his Lies in all the Colours of the Rainbow. Unsatisfied with debasing plain, honest English, and prostituting his Mother-Tongue to most unnatural Falsehood, he hath tortured his little Latin into an Inscription, at once disingenuous, ill-mannered, and untrue. **GERMANIA ASSERTA.** What Interests can his Royal Highness be supposed to have in Germany, except to assert the Liberties of Europe, and oppose her Oppressors?

preffors? His Birth, his Education, the
 Interests of his Fortune, and, we ought
 to believe, (the Germans and the French
 believe) the Inclinations of his Heart are
 truly English. There was a Day --- it
 will be remembered for ever by our De-
 scendants, although forgotten already by
 too many of their ungrateful Fathers ---
 when this Prince, and he alone in all hu-
 man Estimation, preserved the Wealth
 and Honour, the Liberty and Religion
 of his Country. Surely then, if there be
 aught of Gratitude among Mankind; if
 there be any Decencies due to our Su-
 periors, any political Advantages arising
 to Society from a regular Subordination
 of its Members, all these are violated by
 the lying Inscription on the Base of a
 Pedestal, upon which our honourable
 Painter hath placed the Figure of his
 Prince, his Patron once, and his Bene-
 factor.

Such

Such are the Ideas which this honourable Person seems to entertain of social, political Virtues; nor is it easy to conceive, what private Virtues can inhabit that Bosom, in which Ingratitude, the basest and most degenerate of all human Vices, hath taken up its Residence. However, our Painter once lived in the Family of the Prince, whom he has thus boldly exhibited to the Public, was reckoned among his Favourites, and almost honoured with his Friendship. Yet then, even then, while he was hourly receiving Favours and Obligations, he was *gratfully* and *honourably* employed in Caracaturas upon the Person of his Benefactor. It is acknowledged a Baseness of Disposition to insult an Inferior, because we know that the poor Wretch must suffer without Resentment; but is it not the same Baseness to insult a Superior, whose Greatness assures us of Impunity?

But a political Liar of any tolerable
 Genius lies both backward and forward;
 past, present, and to come. He lies in
 the History of Yesterday; he lies in the
 Prophecy of To-morrow. Thus we are
 assured by the Prophets of the Faction,
 that the new Ministry, (though neither
 they, nor we know to whom His MA-
 JESTY will intrust the Administration)
 cannot possibly support themselves; I
 suppose they mean against *their* Opposi-
 tion. Yet this we know with Certainty,
 that these sagacious Lookers into Futurity
 did not foresee their own Dissolution even
 to the last Moment; for even to their
 last Moments they were impetuous, visi-
 onary, and insolent.

Without pretending to their Saga-
 city, we may be most assured His MA-
 JESTY never will again expose his Per-
 son to their Insolence, or intrust his Af-
 fairs

fairs to their Incapacity. No Change can bring these ideal, over-weening Ministers into Place again, or give them another Opportunity of insulting their Sovereign, and violating the Constitution. Alone and unassisted they can gain no Victory, and if some Men of superior Abilities should assist them, they will, it is to be hoped, take a Share of the Conquest. A Family Opposition will never prevail, nor the same Circumstances again combine to give us a Family Administration. An Administration, blind to their own Weakness, true to their own over-bearing Insolence, and false to all the World beside.

But from what we have yet seen, we may expect in this new Administration, what we ought to wish, Men of Birth, Fortune, Experience, and Understanding. "But Mr. F--x is to be a Minister, and "will affect, like Mr. P-----, to make "himself sole Minister, and assume the
" whole

“ whole Power of the Administration.
 “ The Tories hate him——They are a
 “ powerful Party. Others, who shall be
 “ nameless, hate him.” Such is at present
 the Political Language of a vanquished
 Faction.

But let me ask, is Mr. F--x really to
 be a Minister? I have not yet heard him
 mentioned, but for a Place not ministerial.
 I have heard he refused to be the Minister
 in November last, and it is not long since
 he said in the House, that nothing but
 the Commands of his distressed Sovereign
 should make him of their Number. It
 may be hoped, his Sovereign will not be
 distressed into giving such a Command.

Here let me recur to the uncommon
 Fate of this Gentleman. He resigns
 from among unpopular Ministers. His
 Resignation obliges them to resign. He
 declines Ministry; he enters not into Op-
 position

position. Are these things true? Is there in any of these things aught unworthy? Yet what an Heap of Scandal and Calumny hath been poured out upon him for this very Conduct? And how can they be pleased by him, who are not contented with his being out, yet are so alarmed at his coming in? Let us have (I hope we have) an Admiralty, that will employ our Fleet to the best Advantage, without Partiality to Cousins and Kinsmen. Let us have a Secretary of State, who knows something of his Business, and who will not, at the same Time that he declares himself ignorant in his own, dictate in every other Minister's department, in which he knows as little. Let us have a Treasury, that can raise the Supplies, and let them all behave with Submission and Decency in the Presence of our August, Aged and Benign Sovereign, nor dare to think of mortifying him with Orders from those, who by
the

the Tyes of Nature and Gratitude, from Age and Sex, are in a most peculiar Manner bound to obey him. Let this be the Case, and then, if both the famous younger Brothers are left out of Ministry, I hope this Country may yet be preserved, and we know by Experience, and to his Honour, that the ablest of them will not, because left out, go into Opposition.

“But why was this Administration displaced?” The harder Question were how came Mr. Pitt to be Secretary? How came Lord T--e to have the Admiralty? What Reason had any thing they had ever done, given for Expectation of any Good they would do hereafter? And what have they done? The raising fifteen Battalions, without which no Expedition could be sent to America, was the work of the late Ministry. They were raised with a professed Design of sending a large Number of Troops to America.

America. A Plan for that Purpose was in Concert, on which the Captain General and Lord Anson had met more than once. "But the foreign Troops are sent away." Let the worst Enemies of the late Ministers look towards Germany, and say whether they believe their Administration would have kept them here? Has Prussia, has Spain been in better Humour with this, than the late Secretary, or will the Ministers of those Courts say they have found so much regard from this Administration, as true Sense of the Interest of this Country, on all Occasions ensured to them from their Predecessors? Has there been a Grain of Skill shewn in attempting to raise the Supplies? Or shall we hear those, who have been loudest in exclaiming against the paultry Methods ignorantly proposed, now swear that nothing but the displacing Mr. L---e could

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have

have prevented the Subscription from running over. But although Subscriptions are generally filled in a few Days, and often in a few Hours, yet this Scheme, replete with Wisdom and Virtue and Oeconomy, supported by the reputation of the old Man, who formed it, and the Influence of this popular Ministry, was closed with hardly a tenth Part of the two Millions and a half. Neither was it meanly, however unsuccessfully, supported by the spirit of Lying.

It were a Disquisition not unworthy the Amusement of a Philosopher, to inquire into the Nature, Origin and Use, the Success and Effects of these Political Lies. He would perhaps imagine, in accounting for their Success, that a certain Portion of Credulity was allotted by Providence to every Age, and that the present Age,

Age, having by pure Strength of Reason recovered their Freedom from the Slavery of all Religious Belief, (the Whimfies of their Fathers,) have a larger share to dispose of in their political Creeds. He would probably compare these Lies to the swarms of Insects, which, as Naturalists inform us, are conceived and brought forth in the Darkness of Midnight. They appear with the rising Sun, and having performed the little Offices of their being, such as buzzing, fluttering and sometimes stinging, they die with the setting Sun, and are next Day succeeded by a new Generation. If these Insects happen to deposite their Eggs upon any sore or unsound Part of the human Body, Corruption and Inflammations; Gangrenes and Mortification, are the deplorable Consequences. Thus when a swarm of Political Lies have deposite their Poisons in a

weak understanding, and an Heart unhappily prepared to receive them, the poor man is distracted and convulsed; his Judgment disordered, and his whole Mind agitated by Party-Rage and Faction and prejudices, whether of Love or Hatred, equally unaccountable to common Sense.

What better manner of accounting for the violent, distempered proceedings of a late Council, which was once honoured for its Wisdom, and which still assumes the Style and Importance of representing the greatest City in the World? The Project of granting the Freedom of this great City to two Persons in the last Administration was conceived in the Darkness of a midnight Meeting of the Governors of Bridewell. From thence it took its Progress to the Half-Moon Tavern, where we may believe the Spirit of Patriotism

triotism was not a little improved by the
 Spirit of Wine. Here this ever-memo-
 rable Motion, and that inimitable Piece
 of Oratory lately pronounced in a great
 Assembly, were prepared by the united
 Genius of the whole Company. In the
 Speech, what an elegant, unaffected Sim-
 plicity of Diction! *History, the Key of*
Knowledge, and Experience the Touch-stone
of Truth. How profound and just the
 Observations upon our Constitution!
 "The People have always by a timely
 "Opposition *impeded the impending Dan-*
 "ger from those, who have undertaken
 "their public Affairs; they have always
 "been equally ready to reward." Then
 the inexpressible Tenderness of the fol-
 lowing Pathetic, when HIS MAJESTY
 With Candour, and with th' affection
 of a Parent

Regarded

Regarded their Complaints. A Change
of Men

Soon follow'd, and with them such
Change of Measures

Reviv'd the sinking Spirits of the People,

And rais'd a sinking Land. Britannia

then

Almost expiring rais'd her dying Head,

Saw Virtue and Integrity — &c.

The Reader must not be surpris'd, that
Sentiments of such Dignity could not be
express'd in Prose. The Language of
Poetry is their proper Language, their very
Mother-Tongue. But while this admir-
able Oration does Honour to the great
Compilers, it will be sufficient Praise for
Mr. H—s, that he was capable of doing
it Justice by a graceful, animated Action,
and an harmonious, unperplexed Elocu-
tion.

I am

I am not perfectly satisfied, that the following Remarks properly belong to the Title of this Essay; yet I would willingly ask why Loyalty was placed in the Front of these Gentlemen's Virtues? If by Loyalty is meant a personal Attachment of Duty and Affection to the Sovereign, I believe, *their Loyalty was never doubted.* If to take up Arms against the Sovereign for his Defence, was the Loyalty of the last Century, why not of the present to enter his Councils, and advise him against his Will? But with Regard to their being disinterested — One of them took to himself the most lucrative of all our ministerial Employments, and gave some thirty thousand Pounds a Year to his Relations. The other patiently suffered himself to be paid the Salary of his Office. Did his Success in raising the Supplies, his proper

Depart-

Department, entitle him to more? Or why did not this Patriot-Council, who by their immense Property are the natural Representatives of the richest City in the Universe, why did they not fill his subscription? This had been an undeniable Proof of their Esteem, and would have certainly continued him in his Office.

But their lessening the Extent of ministerial Influence by a Reduction of the Number of Placemen. Our Council surely were not informed, it was absolutely denied, more than once, by Mr. L—e, that he had any View to lessening the Influence of the Crown by the Reduction of these Offices, and that Mr. P—t was not in the House during the Debate. Their noble Efforts to stem the Torrent of Corruption must certainly mean their having attempted to give us triennial Parliaments,

and

and secure us against Bribery and Corruption in future Elections. Let them, who have ever heard of such an Attempt, believe it. *Their Zeal to promote a full and impartial Inquiry into the real Causes of our late Losses and Disgrace in America* must certainly be a Mistake, for they have neither of them once moved in it, nor has there been a Paper called for, relating to America, any more than to the Maid-stone Letter.

I would here willingly join Issue with our Orator, or rather with the Tories and the Faction, who employed him. Will they abide by the Behaviour of their now-Brother-Freemen upon this, and the following Days, when the long-delayed Inquiry about Minorca will come on? Let them determine for themselves; but if either of these Gentlemen will even

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yet

yet enter with Spirit into this Inquiry, if they will assume even an Appearance of asserting the national Justice, I promise to declare them worthy of the Freedom of this great City, although it had been honourably purchased. I promise to forget, that they endeavoured to elude the Indignation of a justly-resenting People, and obtained a short Respite for Mr. Byng by imposing upon their Sovereign, and violating the Constitution.

Yet it is really unaccountable, that our Bookseller and Orator, so knowing in the Constitution, so sagacious in discovering Merit, so liberal in rewarding it, and doing about the Freedom of the City so generously, should have forgotten the first Lord of the Admiralty. Poor Lord *Trotter*. Is he then so insignificant, that he has neither Friends to reward, nor Enemies to abuse

abuse him? Or could not all our Orator's Eloquence prevail upon the Merchants to forget, that their Ships have been plundered almost in our Harbours, and the Trade of the Nation, its vital Strength and Spirit, exposed to the Enemy by an ignorant, or inattentive Admiralty?

Amidst these Losses and Disgrace, from whatever Causes or Persons they proceed, is this a Time for bestowing and receiving Honour? Are these Honours to be distributed by a little, petulant Bookseller, the Creature of a malignant, dangerous Faction? Are they intended merely to insult the Sovereign, or to alarm Him from pursuing those Measures, which can alone insure our Preservation? Are they meant to intimidate his Servants, and fright them from their Obedience to his Com-

Commands ? Thank Heaven, our Sovereign still maintains the Vigour of his Understanding, and Firmness of Resolution, with which he opposed the Artifices, that attempted to deceive, and the Violence, that would have compelled him, in a late Instance, to break his Promise to his People. Thank Heaven, we have some great Spirits still left, who dare treat the Clamours of a disappointed Faction with the Contempt, they deserve; who are conscious of the Difficulty, yet do not despair of preserving their Country; who are neither capable of being tempted by Prospects of Ambition in a future Reign to desert their aged Sovereign, nor terrified by popular Fury from performing their Duty to Him, and to their Country.



F I N I S.

